



The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society's

EXCITER

March 2008

Issue No. 444

LOOK INSIDE FOR DETAILS:

- The RARS General Meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month.
- The RARS net meets every night @ 8 pm on 146.64.
- The RARS Technical and Trader's net is Saturdays @ 8:30 pm or following the RARS net.
- RARS meets for a monthly dinner on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

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Reminder: The next RARS meeting will be Tuesday, March 4th at the Forest Hills Baptist Church at 7:30 PM.

This will be the annual RARS birthday celebration and awards ceremony. Refreshments will begin at 7 PM.

President's Corner

**Article by Selene Montgomery KG4RMT,
RARS President**

With spring right around the corner, nature is beginning to come to life, and ham radio activities are blooming as well. Perhaps you find yourself saying, "I wish I had something interesting to do." Maybe I can give you an idea or two.

Hamfests are prominent on my list of things to do, and the season is in full swing. The Richmond Frostfest appeared to be successful in their new venue at the Richmond Raceway. The Orlando Hamcation was another well-attended event, despite high gasoline prices. The Charlotte Hamfest on March 8 & 9 will be a large gathering. RASFEST 2008 on April 12 will be here before we know it, and excitement is building. The list of hamfest possibilities will continue through the fall with events of various size and personality.

Amateur Radio's involvement in public service events continues as well. The Odyssey of the Mind event on March 8 requires a large number of hams to help with communications over several locations. The Red Cross Generator Posse can always use help at their monthly gatherings. Other events include the MS Walk in May, ADA Tour de Cure Bike Ride in June, Firecracker Bike Event in July, and many more.

You say you don't want to leave home for ham activity? Check out the Contest page on the ARRL website. You'll find a long list of contest opportunities whether your preferred mode is phone, CW, or digital. Of course, there's always the pastime of listening and talking on the frequencies.

Lonely is one thing that hams should never be. The chances to interact with those who share this hobby are out there. The friend you haven't met yet is waiting for that hello or handshake. The world can be your neighborhood.

RARS Officers

President:

Selene Montgomery
KG4RMT
919.577.1254
kg4rmt@earthlink.net

Vice-President:

Richard Kelly-Crapse
KB4TKQ
919.577.6290
rwcrapse@att.com

Secretary:

Charles Swindell
WB4DCM
919.848.0410
wb4dcm@arrl.net

Treasurer:

Greg Seamster
KE4PAX
919.859.0029
ke4pax@arrl.net



The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, the society incorporated a new RARS and obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friendship through amateur radio; to be of public service by providing

radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining amateur radio licenses.

Anyone interested in amateur radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family mem-

bers pay \$5 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12 per year. Dues for non-licensed associate members are \$9 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer or on the RARS website (RARS.org).



The *Exciter*

The *Exciter* is the official newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It appears each month as a PDF on the RARS website at www.rars.org. Members receive email notification when the latest version is available. Please provide your email address to the Treasurer.

The *Exciter* welcomes articles, advertising, and other contributions. To submit a piece to the newsletter, please contact the Editor.

The views expressed in the *Exciter* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or RARS.

The Editor reserves the right to edit any and all pieces.

Editor:
Courtney Enzor
KI4HOS
editor@rars.org

Want to be a Published Author?

Everyone has their favorite aspects of amateur radio. From contests to antenna building, there's something for everyone in this great hobby. Why not share your interests, expertise, and experience with RARS in the *Exciter*? We welcome member and non-member/affiliate submissions.

Both technical and non-technical articles are needed for the *Exciter*. You could write up a quick column on QSL cards or a longer how-to piece on setting up a new shack. And don't feel pressured to write a tome; articles of all sizes are appreciated!

To submit an article, simply email your piece to the Editor (editor@rars.org). Please also feel free to attach pictures to accompany your article. It is helpful if you add captions and identify the people in photographs.

We look forward to learning from each other and broadening our club's knowledge base! So break out those pens, pencils, and keyboards and get writing!

VE Testing

The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August, and November RARS meetings; the RARSfest in April; the Cary Swapfest in July; the JARSfest in November; and following RARS license classes.

Please bring a photo ID, your current license, a copy of your current license, and any CSEs you have for credit. Visit www.rars.org for more information.

RARS General Meeting

Date: First Tuesday of each month

Location: Forest Hills Baptist Church
201 Dixie Trail
Raleigh, NC 27607

Time: People begin arriving at 7 pm.
The meeting officially starts at 7:30 pm.

RARS Monthly Dinner

Join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for the RARS dinner. It's open to everyone: RARS members, non-members, friends, and family — feel free to bring your little ones!

Golden Corral @ 6129 Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh. Dinner begins at 6:30 pm.

RARS Repeaters in Raleigh

145.13 (82.5 PL)

146.64

444.525 (82.5 PL)

Join us for the nightly RARS net @ 8 pm on the 146.64. All hams holding a Technician class license or higher are invited to check-in. We welcome both RARS and non-RARS members to the net.



January 2008 RARS Net Reports

Checkins: 408	Special Interest Nets:
Traffic: 29/25	Checkins: 120
Minutes: 656	Minutes: 568
Sessions: 31	Sessions: 12

For information
about public service
opportunities, upcoming
hamfests, and more,
visit www.rars.org.

SKYWARN Updates

Central Carolina SKYWARN will host a SKYWARN Spotter Dinner on Wednesday, March 26, from 6:30-8 PM at the Golden Corral Restaurant at 6129 Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh. State Climatologist Dr. Ryan Boyles will be the guest speaker. His topic will be "Climate Change and What that Means for North Carolina." The dinner will start at 6:30 PM; the program around 7:15 PM. All spotters and weather enthusiasts are invited to attend!

Upcoming SKYWARN Net Programs:

March 4: National Severe Weather Awareness Week with a presentation by Warning Coordination Meteorologist Jeff Orrock KI4KKX; topic TBA.

March 25: Basic Spotter Training (Part I) with NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Jeff Orrock KI4KKX.

For more information, visit www.ccskywarn.net.

March Birthdays

Tim	KD4MBC	3/1
Bob	N4VQN	3/5
Sharon	KD4ACK	3/6
Noble	N4UOQ	3/6
Rich	KR4AS	3/8
Bruce	WA9NEW	3/8
Jay	NT4D	3/8
James	KC9VJ	3/8
Steve	KA9MVA	3/9
Bob	KC4CPD	3/10
Tom	N4TAB	3/10
Jim	WA5APR	3/10
Douglas Smallen		3/10
David	KF4VXJ	3/12
Bob	WA4ZZN	3/12
Larry	K4LXV	3/17
Bill	K4WGE	3/20
Dave	K4LKN	3/21
Bill	AF4JG	3/22
Greg	KE4PAX	3/23
Peg	KB1HVA	3/28
Charles	KI4VMD	3/29
Bj	NC4BJ	3/29

Welcome to RARS!

Robin Lane	KI4LEC
Howard Pearson III	KI4GNB
Vardell Smyth	KB4CVS

March 8-9

April 12

Upcoming Hamfests

Hamfest
Charlotte, NC
www.w4bfb.org/hamfest2008/hamfest.html

RARSFEST 2008
Raleigh, NC
www.rars.org/hamfest

FOR SALE

GAP TITAN DX VERTICAL ANTENNA

This antenna will be sold to some lucky RARS member through an auction on the RARS web site. RARS member Jack Scheinuk, W5WSF, donated the antenna to the club. Jack recently moved into the area from Louisiana where he said he had great results with this antenna, but at his QTH here in Raleigh he needed a better ground system. He now is using another vertical but had to install 64 ground radials.

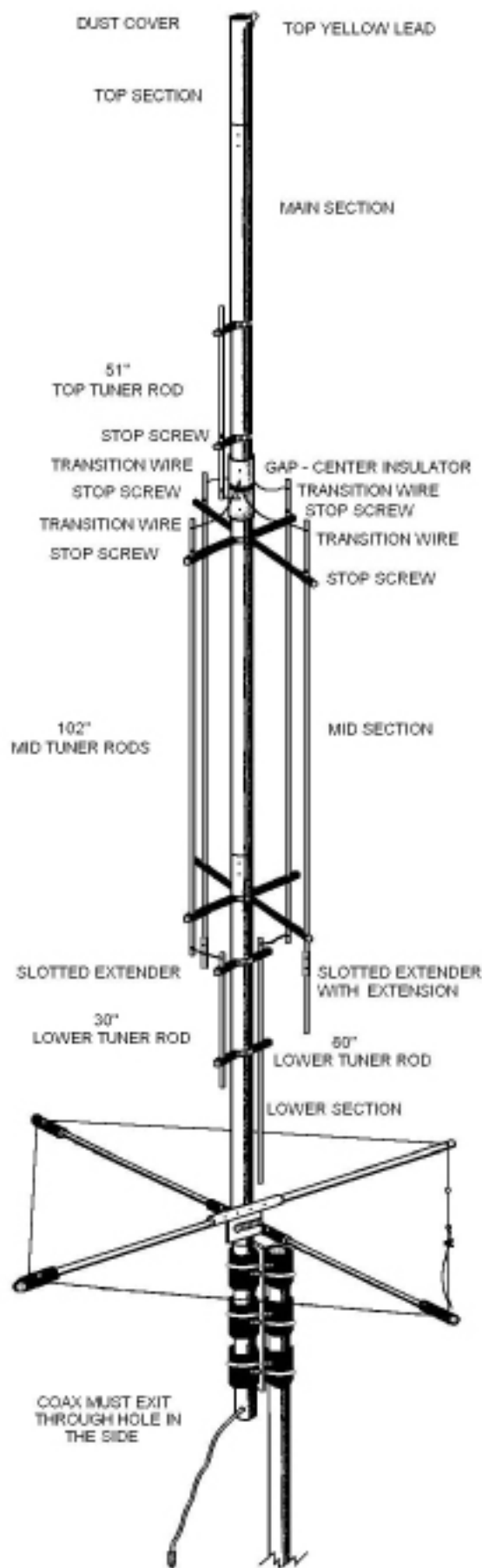
The GAP antenna was taken down with only enough disassembly to make it transportable and it should be easy to reassemble. In it's current condition there are 2 large assemblies, a handful of loose parts, and the 14 page instruction manual. The loose parts include the cross pieces near the mount, the top tuner rod, and some smaller parts.

Complete information including the 14 page instruction manual are downloadable from the GAP website at <http://www.gapantenna.com/titan.html>

The manufacturer's web site shows a price of \$399 for this antenna. It has many good reviews on the eHam web site as well as a few bad reviews – mostly regarding difficulty in tuning the antenna. Used prices on eHam mostly range from \$150 - \$300.

NOTE: Without further disassembly the structure currently has a length of about 17'. If the buyer can not transport that length it will need further disassembly.

For more information contact Hank Montgomery, K4HM, via email at k4hm@arrl.net or via phone at 577-1254.



Minutes of the RARS Board of Directors Meeting for January 2008

The Board of Directors meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was conducted on January 15, 2008 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail.

Attendance: Board—Selene Montgomery KG4RMT, Hank Montgomery K4HM, Rick Kelly-Crapse KB4TKQ, John Snellen AI4RT, Chuck Littlewood K4HF, Mary Jo Littlewood K4MJL, Gary Pearce KN4AQ, Steve Perrarini KJ4BX, Ken McEwen KI4OTO, Rod Thomson KI4LSN, Greg Seamster KE4PAX, Charles Swindell WB4DCM, and one visitor, Dick Orander KD4ISC.

At 7:00 PM the meeting was called to order by President Selene Montgomery KG4RMT. She welcomed all and thanked them for being there.

On a motion from Hank K4HM and second by Rick KB4TKQ, the minutes of the November Board meeting were approved as presented.

VP Rick KB4TKQ discussed comments that he had heard from members regarding the “meet and greet” program that was held at the January meeting. There was discussion about doing an abbreviated version of that program at more meetings. The President will use her discretion based upon time availability. Rick then advised that the program for the February meeting, Digital Voice, would be presented by Gary KN4AQ. He also indicated that comments from the membership suggest that they would prefer more technical type of programs. The March program will be the annual RARS birthday party. The April meeting program will concern the RARSFest and he is working on programs for the remainder of the year. Donations for the January refreshments were \$24 and the membership seem to like the more healthy options. Rick announced that he would be unable to continue as VP at the end of his current term.

Treasurer Greg KE4PAX, presented the treasurer’s report. RARS currently has 231 members, and is operating in a deficit at the moment. However that is normal in the lead up to the RARSFest.

Committee Reports

The deadline for the February RARS Exciter is Monday, January 22. The normal deadline is the Monday prior to the Board meeting.

There were no issues with the nets.

The web site for the hamfest will be updated by Hank K4HM.

Rick KB4TKQ will be primary for the homebrew SIG.

There was brief discussion about an alternate location for field day.

John AI4RT made brief comments as the new Public Service Director. He has contacted Bill Cole with the Helping Hands. The question was raised as to how organizations needing communications for some event contact RARS. There was no definitive answer presented.

Hamfest Chairman Hank K4HM went through a summary of hamfest status. The new date for the hamfest will be Saturday, April 12, 2008. The next committee meeting will be on Monday, January 28th at Chuck & Mary Jo

Littlewood's. The tickets and flyers are at the printers but should be ready. The tickets have to go to the fair grounds to be audited. We have not received a list from ARRL yet. When received, Hank will clean it up and use to mail flyers. A crew of four interested parties is needed to help with the "youth lounge." Andrea Hartlage, KG4IUM will be the ARRL representative at the hamfest. Sign Man, Cedar City, DBJ, Wire Man, etc will be here for this hamfest---lots of dealers that missed last year will be here because there is not a conflict with other hamfests. We may face a space problem and there was brief discussion about an outdoor flea market. A pending utility upgrade may impact parking around the Expo Center. Hank explained that there would be an auto email response to table purchases.

Gary, KN4AQ advised that the DStar repeater was on loan and would be returned when the regular repeater had completed repairs. The question was asked as to the location of the 6-meter repeater. Basically, it was junk. If someone would like to put up a 6-meter repeater, they can do so under the auspices of RARS.

Ken, KI4OTO then mentioned that our monthly supper get together seemed to lack appeal. If we move to another location, we will need a private area, no charge for a room, flexible number of attendees, and a variety of food. This makes locating a restaurant difficult. Next, Ken advised that on a visit to the public library that there were no books on antennas. He did find a reprint of the 1926 Handbook. We had a brief discussion about donating books to a library.

Old Business

President Selene, KG4RMT advised that she had submitted the application and other information to the Forest Hills Baptist Church to continue using their facilities for our meetings. The application has been approved and the deposit has been waived but the fees have increased. We can only use the areas that we actually rent. There was discussion about the advantages/disadvantages of various rooms in the church, how those rooms would fit our needs, and the rental costs. Several other possibilities for meeting locations were raised: NC State, YMCA, or Meredith College. President Selene will consult with the church about such issues as trash cans, ice, VE test areas, semiannual payments, conference room, and moving the meeting to the upstairs room. After that, the issue will be presented to the membership.

A GAP Titan DX vertical antenna has been donated to RARS. After discussion, it was decided that we would have a silent auction on the web with a \$75 minimum.

Treasurer Greg, KE4PAX advised that the budget forecast puts us in line for the remainder of this fiscal year. We have experienced an increase in education expenses due to book purchases. He prepares a balance sheet that list our accounts and fixed assets.

President Selene suggested that we all go to the website and get a copy of our by-laws and read up.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Minutes of the RARS February 5, 2008 Meeting

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail. There were 58 members and guests present.

President Selene Montgomery, KG4RMT called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. She welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them to sign in. The VE testing is underway in an upstairs room. She advised everyone that the table at the front right of the room has various goodies of interest to amateur radio, some of which are free.

The visitors this evening are: Jim DuKenan, Robert Young NC4ME, Josh Young KJ4AVW, John Booth WB4DDK, Lanny Aldrich K1LEC, Bob Chapman NC1X, Mike Thurman KB7NLA, and Mike Pinkerton (waiting for his call).

President Selene made the following announcements:

- The secretary's minutes are in the Exciter. There were no corrections or additions to the minutes.
- The treasurer was not present at the meeting, so President Selene made a few comments about our financial affairs.
- Following our Tuesday evening meeting, members and guests are invited to go to supper at a local restaurant.
- The next Board meeting will be Tuesday, February 19 in the conference room of the church.
- The hamfest season is upon us. We were reminded to the upcoming fests.
- The March program will be RARS' birthday party and awards.
- The second Tuesday of each month, members and guests gather at the Golden Coral on Glenwood Ave for supper and social. All are welcome.
- The Exciter was late due to a computer failure of the editor. The normal deadline is the Monday prior to the Board meeting.
- The RARS' website is running a silent auction for a vertical antenna. All members are encouraged to make a bid.
- The Board is working to maintain a balanced budget. The hamfest does not generate the profit that it used to. In order to reduce some our costs, we are moving the meeting room to the large room on the top floor of the church. That may begin as early as the March meeting.

Our Public Service Coordinator John, AI4RT advised that we had several public service events coming up. On March 8, is the Odyssey of the Mind. Brian Young is coordinating. On May 3, is the MS Walk in the RTP. Bob Condor K4RLC is coordinating.

The first door prize drawing went to Rick KB4TKQ who won a copy of Backyard Antennas. Eddie Davis WK4I won a copy of HF Digital Handbook.

After having been initially overlooked, Hank K4HM made some quick comments about the upcoming RARS-Fest. Members were asked to visit our website and volunteer to help; talk about the fest at every opportunity; that we have a workers party for volunteers; announced that tickets are now available; and that setup and the hospitality supper would be on Friday.

VP Rick KB4TKQ introduced Gary KN4AQ who did a program on D-Star and digital voice.

Gary began his presentation by reviewing early digital products such as CD's, then cell phones, then video cameras, then D-link routers, then cordless phones, and finally scanners. On February 19, 2009 analog TV will cease and commercial TV will be all digital. Hams are using digital in DSP, a system to improve signal to noise ratio. We were treated to a brief video of the Dayton Hamvention and a demo of digital that was given there. One issue with digital is that it is either there or it is not. Gary then went through discussion of some of the equipment and computer programs used in digital. HF digital is not quite ready for total acceptance yet.

Next, Gary went into a demo and discussion of the D-Star system. D-Star repeater operations are different from our current repeater operations and will take some adjustments to use. D-Star has many options and unique operating techniques to numerous to cover in this brief review. But it includes automatic ID'ing, linking to other repeaters in the world via the internet and call sign squelch. Gary gave a brief discussion about whether or not a D-Star repeater is a "repeater" per FCC rules and is governed by coordinating groups. Overall, I think that everyone agreed that it was an excellent program. Thanks, Gary!

President Selene thanked everyone for coming and reminded them of the next meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:06PM.

Charles Swindell, WB4DCM
Secretary



The **RARS Technical & Trader's net** is held on Saturday evenings on the 146.64 after the 8 pm RARS net.

Amateur Radio Nets



The **VOIP Hurricane net** is held Sundays at 00:00 UTC on the 146.775 repeater with a tone of 88.5 (IRLP node 4260). For information about activation details, go to www.voipwx.net.

Please join us on the **Carolina 440 net** every Monday night at 7:30 pm. This ragchew net utilizes the Carolina 440 UHF Link Repeater System. Comprised of the Raleigh, Down East, and Costal Wilmington link systems, there are currently 19 repeaters on the system, covering 21,168 square miles. For a list of these repeaters, please visit www.carolina440.net.



CAROLINA 440
UHF Link System
www.carolina440.net

Join us every evening at 8 pm on the 146.64 repeater for the **RARS Two Meter net**. You can give a ragchew, check in and out (this counts for our total numbers reported to the ARRL!), make announcements, and pass traffic. We also offer National Traffic System traffic training. All licensed stations are welcomed to participate in the net as often as they can. This net is also a great way to learn about amateur radio if you are newly licensed!

The **PCTN (Piedmont Coastal Traffic Net)** meets every night at 9 pm on the 146.88. The purpose of the net is to handle/pass NTS formal messages. Amateur stations are encouraged to check-in and participate. The backup repeater is the 147.105 machine with a PL tone of 82.5.





Join the **Tarheel Short Wave Listening (SWL) Special Interest Group (SIG)** net on Monday evenings @ 9 pm on 146.64. We discuss all areas of radio monitoring and welcome your logs! We also have a SWL/SIG meeting on the third Monday of the month in addition to our regular net.

Central Carolina SKYWARN

Please join us each Tuesday at 9:15 pm on the 146.88 repeater for the CCS net. On each net there are announcements, check-ins by county, and often a program or training spot. Check us out at www.centralcarolinaskywarn.net.

See page 4 for information about upcoming SKYWARN nets and our SKYWARN dinner.



The Mercury Amateur Radio Association Southeast 2 Meter Net

meets at 9 pm Sunday evenings on the 146.64 repeater (temporarily). All stations are invited to participate in this net. MARA provides emergency communication support to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The purpose of this net is to assist ham radio operators in preparing to respond to emergencies, test their equipment, improve operating skills, pass traffic, and to provide those with a common interest an opportunity to meet.



MERCURY
AMATEUR
RADIO
ASSOCIATION

MARA

The **Wake County ARES** net meets Thursdays around 2115 on the 146.88 repeater. We provide discussion and training for the implementation and provision of Emergency Communications for our served agencies, such as the American Red Cross and the local and state Emergency Operations Center. Please join us. www.wakeares.org.

The RARS

~~Exciter~~

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc
PO Box 17124
Raleigh, North Carolina 27619

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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RARSFest 2008

Mark your calendars and spread the word! The 36th annual
RARSFest will be held on Saturday, April 12th.
That's right – a Saturday hamfest!

Tickets are available NOW! Get them early!

For more information, visit www.rars.org/hamfest/.